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Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

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Strengthening the terrorism prevention branch of the Secretariat

Fourteenth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Secretariat (A/57/152 and Corr.1, and Add.1 and Corr.1, and Add.2). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. The above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to make proposals to strengthen the Terrorism Prevention Branch at the United Nations Office at Vienna in order to enable it to carry out its mandates as approved by the General Assembly, and to report thereon to the Assembly for its consideration.

3. The Advisory Committee notes that the report of the Secretary-General was initially submitted under item 102 of the provisional agenda (Crime prevention and criminal justice). Corrigenda were subsequently issued, submitting the report under item 112 (Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003). The Committee also notes that the Third Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.10 on 10 October 2002.

4. The report of the Secretary-General (A/57/152 and Corr.1) provides a brief summary of the substantive, organizational and programmatic aspects of the activities related to the prevention and combat of terrorism (sect. II of the report), and proposals for a strengthened programme of work for fulfilling the expanded mandates (paras. 18-22). The focus is on the provision of assistance to Member States, upon request, for ratifying and implementing the 12 international conventions and protocols related to terrorism. In this connection, the Committee

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notes the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005, as contained in paragraph 12.3 (f), under strategy for achieving the objectives, paragraph 12.7 (e), under expected accomplishments and paragraph 12.8 (b), under indicators of achievement (see A/57/6, (Prog. 12)).

5. The Committee also notes that the resources included in the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 provide for two Professional posts (1 P-5 and 1 P-4) and for consultants, contractual services, official travel of staff and printing. It further notes that the additional resources proposed by the Secretary-General to strengthen the Terrorism Prevention Branch for 2003 amount to $563,800 and that a breakdown of cost requirements is provided (A/57/152/Add.2, annex).

6. The Committee notes the course of action set out in paragraph 2 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/152/Add.2). As indicated therein, should the General Assembly approve the strengthening of the Terrorism Prevention Branch, additional costs amounting to $619,400, inclusive of staff assessment requirements, would arise, chargeable to the contingency fund, pursuant to the provisions of Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211.

7. **Rather than proceed in the manner proposed by the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee recommends that proposals for additional resources, including posts, be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.**

8. **The Committee recognizes that, if the course of action it is recommending is followed, it would mean that recruitment against such posts as may be approved by the General Assembly (in December 2003) for the biennium 2004-2005, may not be completed until near the end of 2004. In order to expedite this process, the Secretary-General could initiate the recruitment process during 2003, on the understanding that the candidates would be informed that the availability of the posts in question would be subject to the decision to be taken by the Assembly in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. In addition, the Secretary-General could, subject to availability of funds for the biennium 2002-2003, recruit staff on a temporary basis for 2003, on the understanding that the continuation of their functions, beyond 31 December 2003, would be subject to the approval by the Assembly of the related resources for the biennium 2004-2005.**